

LONESTAR NEWS

SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION, 2BCT, 4ID
FOB KALSU, IRAQ



July 2006



Words from Lone Star 6

Ahlen (Hello),

The heat is on! As we hit probably one of the two hottest months in this deployment, the Lonestars reached new heights of teamwork and composure under pressure. Our battalion has been extremely busy this month, however we have found a good balance of work and play.

COL Tully, our brigade commander, implemented the first annual FOB Kalsu Commander's Cup, scheduled on the 4th of July. In this competition, each unit on FOB Kalsu could participate for the Cup. The four main teams were HHC, BDE (the Spartans), 2-8 Infantry (the Talons), STB (the Lonestars), and a conglomeration of the other units on FOB Kalsu made up the fourth team. STB, being the smallest battalion in the Brigade, did not seem to at first glance have a good prospect at winning the event. However, with much ingenuity on behalf of my company commanders, we figured out which events we would have to win in order to win the Cup. Lonestar Soldiers participated in everything from basketball to dodge ball to checkers to weightlifting. With an incredible display of heart and determination, the Lonestars gave it all they had, and in the end, came out on top, winning the Cup. I was incredibly proud of the team as we fought to the finish and did not give up once. You can be proud of your Soldiers as this work ethic is not only put towards athletic competition, but in every single thing they do.

This month, our Signal Company had a bittersweet end to the chapter of CPT Everingham's company command. After 19 months of commanding the Bulldogs, CPT Everingham left the company as one of the strongest and hardest working units in the brigade. The Bulldogs have a indisputable reputation as maintaining the largest communications support in the theater, much of which is due to the leadership of CPT Everingham. The first eight months of the deployment would have not gone as smoothly without him. CPT Everingham was one of the finest commanders I have seen, and the battalion was lucky to have him for as long as we did. His wife, Crystal, and their two children were an impressive command team that truly took care of their Soldiers.



July Promotions

CPT Carter (HHC)
CPT Depreo (HHC)
CW2 Goodwin (HHC)
SPC Brewer (B Co)
SPC Justus (B Co)
PFC Musson (HHC)
PFC Moeckel (HHC)



Crystal's efforts in the FRG were irreplaceable as she dedicated hundreds of selfless hours to the company and battalion. Our battalion will miss the Everinghams, however, we know they will be a welcome team to any unit they are a part of.

The battalion welcomes CPT Nate Saul as the new Signal company commander. We are excited to have him from 1-10 CAV, as he is already well known as a superb officer in the brigade. The Lonestar family also welcomed MAJ Chis Beck, his wife Sally and two children. MAJ Beck is taking over for MAJ Hoenig as the battalion operations officer, working down at the MiTT as an integral part of that team. MAJ Hoenig has been with the battalion for over a year and the excellent training for our Soldiers both pre-deployment and in theater has been largely due to his tireless efforts. His work with the MiTT was instrumental in developing working relationships and continued success with the Iraqi Army. MAJ Hoenig made a significant impact on the Lonestars, and he will always be a Lonestar to those that worked with him.

This month CSM Curtice and I were able to recognize several Soldiers with coins of excellence. Soldiers across the battalion are doing remarkable jobs, often going far above the call of duty. Soldiers working in the detention facility, Soldiers providing crucial intelligence to the brigade, and Soldiers conducting last minute missions with the same intensity as they would daily operations. Our Soldiers know their jobs and know them extraordinarily well. I could not be prouder of the Lonestar team. Additionally this month, I was able to promote two very deserving Soldiers. After much waiting and anticipation, SPC Daniel was promoted to SGT, a leadership role which he has been filling for many months already. We can officially call CW2 Goodwin a "chief", as he pinned on this month as well.

Bottom line, our Soldiers have only continued to impress me daily with their discipline and teamwork. We are looking forward to completing this mission with our heads held high and coming home to the ones who have been behind us the whole time – thank you all you do, it is your support that has gotten us this far and will bring us home. First In!

LTC R.J. Muraski Jr.
"Lonestar 6"



Private Talk

Less than one hundred days left! At least, that is what is going around. I don't know how true that is but I do know we are over half way. Thoughts of the states are slowly starting to populate in everyone's heads. This has definitely been a long deployment. If you listen very closely, you can hear people counting down the days under their breath.

Here at the REO it has pretty much been business as usual. Although there have been some personnel changes, bringing in a new S3, and a second SGM. Lord help us, we'll need it. Having two SGMs makes a private feel like a deer in headlights. Only problem is, even if you could run, there is no where to go. But all in all I think things we'll work out fine. The new S3 has already come on station and things seem to be flowing just fine. The guy seems to know his stuff. I haven't had the opportunity to meet the new SGM yet, that will happen tonight when he arrives. Please pray for me!!!

The action has picked up a little bit around the REO. I never thought I would say it but I think I miss Kalsu. I had a little more time to relax there. We just received our UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle), which I just happened to be trained on. It is really just a small remote control airplane, with a camera on it. But it does give a lot of good information and surveillance opportunities. Also the IA (Iraqi Army) seems to be picking up a little bit. I went out to a range with them the other day. I am not so sure they are getting better at shooting, but they did look a lot more uniformed and professional. They have also been getting a lot more active in combat actions around Al Hillah. I don't think I can name one event that has happened out here, involving coalition forces, in which either the IA or the IP (Iraqi Police) were not involved.

Otherwise it is just the same old same out here, trying to make every day go a little bit faster than the last. It seems like the closer we get to going home, the slower the days go. Being right here by the REO does have its advantages though. Some of the other non military groups out here keep having shrimp and steak cook-outs in which they have been inviting us, on a regular basis. Just wish that I liked steak. Yes I said it, "I am from Texas and I don't like steak." Sorry if I hurt anyone's feelings. But I know most of the other soldiers here have really been enjoying it.

So guess that's about it. Can't wait to get back and see everyone. I know everyone here feels exactly the same way.

Promoting the newest SGT in the Army – SGT Daniel (A Co)
(left)

Special Troops Battalion rear continues to train, maintain and support forward soldiers and families. In July 2006, STB sent six Soldiers forward to join our unit; SPC Woolum, SPC Byrd, PFC Fricke, PV2 Wilson, PV2 Ganaway, PV2 Her



MSG Lewis received the Bronze Star Medal 14JUL06 for his outstanding dedication and leadership while deployed in Iraq. MSG Lewis will attend the Sergeant Major Academy this August.

The Virtual FRG website is up and running! Please register and visit our new Battalion website. Go to www.armyfrg.org

NEW spouses of deployed Soldiers support group on 8 August and 12 September at Lane Volunteer Center Bldg 19005. For more information call 288-1431.

Important dates:

25 July / 22 Aug– Purple heart/volunteer ceremony
7 August – Newcomers Brief
17 August - 4ID Memorial Ceremony

Helpful Numbers

Command Financial Specialist: 287-3418
Battalion Staff Duty: 287-7748
Army Community Service: 287-3726
New Parent Support: 287-2286
Fort Hood Chaplains: 287-CHAP
Military ONESOURCE: 1-800-342-9647

LONESTAR!

CPT Audry Townsell

LONESTAR 6R



DHA Soldiers with their newly awarded Battalion Coins of Excellence



LTC Muraski promoting Chief Goodwin to CW2



Iraqi children making Chai for the MiTT Soldiers

HHC Hurricanes

(This month's update is brought to you by 1LT Gardner, who was the acting XO throughout most of the month while 1LT Judy was on leave, and also the acting company commander while CPT Park was away with MiTT 820, 821 and 822 going out on raids.)

Hello to all of the Hurricane friends and family. As we finish up our eighth month in country, the excitement of seeing you all again is creeping into everyone's mind. The mission at hand is a tedious one, but the Soldiers of HHC are still relentless in their duties. This last month has seen many changes occur throughout our Area of operations, and the Hurricanes have responded excellently.

The maintenance section has been busy this month fixing up vehicles that have been used non stop. The shop never fails to amaze all of those it supports. SGT Wilkins and SPC Dickerson worked late into the night one evening to get a LMTV ready for the MP Platoon to use on an escort mission the next day. Their expertise and ingenuity ensured the mission was successful. The entire shop has their hands full adding new improvements to the vehicles, while still completing any other daily tasks assigned to them.

The field feeding section also has seen some changes this month. With the FOB expansion and units throughout the Warhorse Area of Operations moving to Kalsu, they find themselves busier each day. Led by SSG Mitchell, they are doing an outstanding job providing force protection to every person in FOB Kalsu. PV2 Dubey continues to keep our morale up by his gregarious and upbeat attitude as he greets each and everyone of us when we enter the DFAC. They should also be credited for the DFAC expansion. With very little external support, they expanded the DFAC, making it more suitable to the needs of the FOB.

The Military Police Platoon found out that things aren't always normal this month, with a large influx of detainees and mission support to be done. This month we promoted PV2 Moeckel and PV2 Musson to Specialist, promotions well earned in the daily grind of the division holding area. The dynamic operations conducted by the 2BCT brought many more prisoners than in the past. The MP Platoon responded well, and once again managed to accomplish the mission in spite of shortages and other ongoing missions. The platoon also finds itself working with both Alpha and Bravo companies of the STB. We welcome the external support that they provide, and look forward to completing this very important mission in conjunction with the rest of the Battalion.

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Down at REO, the Military Transition Team conducted its third combined raid with its Iraqi partner unit. It was a successful mission which showcased our ability to interoperate with the Iraqi Army as well as the Iraqi Police. CPT Carlisle led one of the raid elements, while CPT Ellis led one of the security elements.

Last, but not least, athletes from all sections of the company helped our battalion win the Commander's Cup on 4th of July. Though we lost volleyball, football, dodge ball, and basketball, by winning all four female weight categories of weightlifting, as well as two male weight categories, and winning the dominoes and checkers, we defeated 2-8 Infantry battalion 1375 to 1325. This great upset helped galvanize the company and increase its already high morale.

The Hurricanes are doing great things here in Iraq, and you should all be very proud of what they are accomplishing. We appreciate all of the support that is provided from you at the home front. We realize that although we are the ones that are deployed, our duties in the rear are being done by our loved ones. Thanks for all of your support, and know that we are doing great things over here!



PV2 Moeckel being congratulated after his promotion



The Lonestar Ladies Lifting champs with coach SSG Jara (right)

Alpha Company Stalkers

Dear Family, Friends & Soldiers of the Stalkers,

The fast moving train continues rolling towards the end of this deployment with no complaints from any Stalkers. Planning for returning home is picking up pace and that's a pretty exciting thing for all of us.

Since the last newsletter we've welcomed two new Soldiers to the Stalker Family; PFC Park, a signals intelligence analyst and Korean linguist joined the SIGINT Platoon. SGT Storey, an automated logistical specialist joined us as well and was quickly integrated into the IEW. Congratulations goes out to SPC Segundo of the TUAV PLT who was married to Carolina Martinez of San Antonio, TX during his mid-tour leave, and to SPC Steward who returned from her mid-tour leave engaged. We welcome them both into the Stalker family.

Further we congratulate PFC Bellinger of SIGINT PLT's promotion to PFC and SPC McCary as the recipient of the first ever "Stalker of the Month" award for the month of June. She was selected from among 78 other Stalkers and recognized as the most deserving for her efforts in the Alpha Company supply shop. Further SPCs Pershing, Holland and Harshner – all Interrogators, were recommended for promotion to Sergeant. This is a huge step in any enlisted Soldier's career and the First Sergeant can't wait to place more challenges on them. Additionally, SGT Leban, of the Recon Platoon was recommended for promotion to Staff Sergeant.

Also this month 1LT Aptaker and SSG Cottrell successfully escaped captivity at FOB Kalsu to the remote site at Camp David down in Najaf. They were fugitives at Camp David for five days before we successfully tracked them down and brought them back to FOB Kalsu. They were having a lot of fun at David firing weapons from the Operational Detachment Delta's, (ODA), arms room as well as just getting away from FOB Kalsu for a while. SGT Choi took care of them while they were at David and proved herself more than capable of running the remote site there. They likely would have gotten away with hiding out at David for much longer, except 1LT Aptaker had eaten all of their ice cream and the other Soldiers contacted us pleading with us to come and pick him up before he moved on to their cereal supply.



Alpha Company enjoys their organized athletics and duke it out on the volleyball court (left)

SIGINT PLT is currently minus their PL as 1LT Antao is on mid-tour leave with her fiancé. 1LT Olzacki, the Recon PL is finally back from her leave and anxious to get back to work. IEW moving has been actively moving to a new location, slightly closer to the Company CP and roomier. These guys have really become quite popular throughout the Brigade as the fix it guys for all things electronic. What was once a well guarded secret has gotten out and significantly increased their workload.

We participated in sporting competitions this month as well, coming in 2nd place in league volleyball. The next round is ongoing and we think we have a much better chance at taking first now that we've gotten some practice in. Soldiers and family members alike enjoyed the Video Teleconference we did on 17 JUN 06. We're planning more based upon the success of the last one; The next VTC is currently scheduled for 12 AUG 06, and the following is tentatively scheduled for 14 October. This will be available to those able to make it to Ft. Hood and will be at the Ironhorse Readiness Center from 1 pm to 3 pm. We hope to see you there!

CPT Townsell, the Rear-Detachment Commander, has put together the virtual FRG website where our Company newsletters are posted and where we will be posting pictures. To access this site go to <http://www.armyfrg.com/skins/FRGPat/display.aspx> You will have to register, which is relatively simple and please keep in mind it is a work in progress as we continue to add materials.

For my part, I have been in command of this great company for four months now and I can honestly say this is a great bunch of Soldiers. I have been in this Army over 15 years and have not seen such a collective of motivated and determined Soldiers in all of that time. These Soldiers are brilliant at their jobs, unquestionably loyal to their Country, their Duty and to each other, and continue to build a camaraderie that will be lasting.

Happy Birthday to the Chemical Corps (28 June), the Military Intelligence Corps (1 July), and to Alpha Company (12 July)!

CPT Wayne Prince
-STALKER 6



1SG enjoys his birthday in Iraq

Bravo Company Bulldogs

Hello from Iraq. Another month has passed and the Bulldogs continue to impress with phenomenal communications support to the brigade. I am happy to report the promotions of PFC's Brewer, Adams and Justus to the rank of specialist. In addition to his promotion, SPC Justus also reenlisted renewing his pledge to our Army and our nation. I am extremely proud of the hard work and the sacrifices made by these Soldiers and their new rank is well deserved.

I am sad to say that this will be my last newsletter as I am passing command on to CPT Nathan Saul and will be moving up to the division staff for the remainder of the deployment. It is hard to believe that 19 months have passed since I took over and I find myself in awe of everything the company has accomplished in that time. I owe all of the success we have had to the Soldiers who worked long and hard hours to accomplish the missions that were given to us. I have really enjoyed working with the Soldiers and their families and will miss being associated with such a great group of people. I want to thank all of the Soldiers for making me look good and their families for their continued support of all of us while we are deployed. I know that the company will be in good hands, CPT Saul is a great officer and leader and I have no doubt that he will continue to take good care of the Soldiers. I am sure that he will be able to lift the company to new heights during his time as commander and wish him the best of luck.

Bulldog 6 out.



B Co Soldiers conduct change of command inventories



CPT Saul looks over all the equipment with SGT Holland



CPT Saul and CPT Everingham

Incoming and Outgoing Signal Company Commanders